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Financing of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei

Financing arrangements for the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei for the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017

Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

I. Introduction

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the note by the Secretary-General on financing arrangements for the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei for the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017 (UNISFA) (A/71/876). During its consideration of the financing arrangements for UNISFA for that period, the Advisory Committee met with representatives of the Secretary-General, who provided additional information and clarification, concluding with written responses received on 19 May 2017.

II. Background

2. In its resolution 2179 (2014), the Security Council decided to extend the mandate of UNISFA until 28 February 2015 and requested the Secretary-General, with support from the African Union Commission and the Government of Ethiopia, to explore options to expedite the implementation of the outstanding administrative and security elements of the June 2011 Agreement between the Government of the Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement on temporary arrangements for the administration and security of the Abyei Area. In its resolution 2205 (2015), the Security Council decided to extend the mandate of UNISFA until 15 July 2015 and decided to maintain the troops authorized by resolution 2104 (2013) already deployed. It also decided that the remaining authorized forces should continue to be deployed, consistent with the evolution of the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism, so as to enable UNISFA to provide required force protection to the Mechanism and also to enable UNISFA to fully support the Mechanism in conducting extended operations into the Safe Demilitarized Border Zone.

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3. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that in June and July 2015 a force protection unit of 450 troops was deployed to the mission in response to Security Council resolution 2179 (2014), the requirements for which were not provided for in the budget for UNISFA for the 2015/16 period.

III. Additional resource requirements for the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017

4. The General Assembly, in its resolution 69/294, appropriated an amount of $268,256,700 gross ($266,018,700 net) for the maintenance of the mission for the period from 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016. The Secretary-General indicates that standard troop costs and other expenses in the amount of $7.1 million were deferred from the 2015/16 period, mainly as a result of the deployment of a force protection unit of 450 troops, which was beyond the planning parameters that underpinned the approved budget for the 2015/16 period (A/71/876). The Secretary-General's budget performance report for the 2015/16 period (A/71/624) does not reflect the financial implications of this force protection unit.

5. **The Advisory Committee is concerned about the lack of information provided by the Secretariat regarding the deployment of the force protection unit of 450 troops and its related cost implications in the Secretary-General's budget performance report for the period from 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016 (A/71/624). The Advisory Committee is of the view that UNISFA should have included information on the force protection unit deployed in June and July 2015 and its related cost implications in its budget performance report for the 2015/16 period.**

6. The Secretary-General indicates that costs in the amount of $11.3 million will be incurred in the 2016/17 period as a result of the continued deployment of existing tank and artillery units (A/71/876, para. 4). He also indicates that the approved budget for UNISFA for the 2016/17 period took into account the planned repatriation of existing tank and artillery units prior to the beginning of that period (A/70/701, para. 29). The requirements of $11.3 million for those units during the 2016/17 period, coupled with the $7.1 million of exceptional deferred costs from the 2015/16 period, result in total additional requirements in the amount of $18.4 million for the 2016/17 period.

7. The Secretary-General indicates that the mission will be able to absorb from within its approved budget $7.1 million of the total $18.4 million in additional requirements for the 2016/17 period (A/71/876, para. 5). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the cash reserves of the mission as at 15 May 2017 were $72.8 million, before deductions relating to the operating reserve, troop and formed police unit payments and contingent-owned equipment reimbursements.

8. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that, based on current projections for the 2016/17 period, the mission will utilize 100 per cent of its approved budget for the 2016/17 financial period, not including the $11.3 million in additional resources required. The Secretary-General requests an appropriation of $11.3 million in resources for the reimbursement of standard troop costs to the troop-contributing country (A/71/876).

9. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was also informed that if additional funding were not to be approved, the mission would not be able to meet, from existing resources, the financial commitments referred to above. It was also informed that expenditures would then be deferred to the 2017/18 period, with a

resulting continuation of underbudgeting as those amounts were not included in the mission's proposed budget for the 2017/18 period.

10. **The Advisory Committee reiterates the importance of settling claims by troop- and police-contributing countries in a timely manner.**

IV. Other issues

11. In accordance with Security Council resolution 2318 (2016), the Council considered the special report of the Secretary-General on the review of the mandate of UNISFA, a strategic review comprising an in-depth examination into the related resources and structure of its uniformed and civilian components (S/2017/293). On 15 May 2017, in its resolution 2352 (2017), the Security Council extended the mandate of UNISFA until 15 November 2017 and also decided to reduce the authorized troop ceiling for UNISFA from 5,326 to 4,791, the first reduction since 2013. As referred to in its report on the mission's budget performance for the 2015/16 period and proposed budget for the 2017/18 period, the Advisory Committee recalled that 5,101 military contingent personnel had been approved for the 2017/18 period and that, as at 28 February 2017, 4,378 were deployed (A/71/836/Add.13, para. 11). It also noted that a lower delayed deployment factor of 14 per cent was used to estimate the proposed resource requirements for the 2017/18 period (ibid, para. 21). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that there would be no financial impact on the proposed budget for 2017/18 resulting from Security Council resolution 2352 (2017).

V. Conclusion

12. The proposed action to be taken by the General Assembly in connection with the financing of UNISFA for the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017 is indicated in paragraph 8 of the note by the Secretary-General (A/71/876).

13. **The Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly authorize the Secretary-General to enter into commitments in an amount not to exceed $11.3 million for the maintenance of the mission for the 12-month period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017, in addition to the amount of $268,624,600 already appropriated for the same period for the maintenance of the mission under the terms of General Assembly resolution 70/269. The Secretary-General should be requested to provide detailed information on actual expenditures incurred in the context of the performance report of UNISFA for the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017.**